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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 2 OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 847 (1993)

INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 847 of 30 June 1993, the Security Council decided to extend UNPROFOR's mandate for an additional interim period terminating on 30 September 1993, and requested the Secretary-General to report after one month on progress towards implementation of the United Nations peace-keeping plan for Croatia and all relevant Security Council resolutions, taking into account the position of the Croatian Government. The Security Council further decided to reconsider, in the light of this report, UNPROFOR's mandate in the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

I. BACKGROUND

2. It will be recalled that in my report of 25 June 1993, I drew attention to the failure of the parties to permit implementation of the United Nations peace-keeping plan and to cooperate in establishing a political process which would offer the prospect of an early agreed settlement. I noted, nevertheless, that the presence of UNPROFOR was indispensable to control of the conflict, to the fostering of a climate in which negotiations between the parties could be promoted, to prevent the resumption or escalation of conflict, to provide a breathing-space for the continued efforts of the peacemakers and to support the provision of essential humanitarian assistance. I further informed the Council that the termination of UNPROFOR's mandate at that point would, in the judgement of my Special Representative, risk the resumption of a major conflict in the region and cause severe adverse consequences for humanitarian relief operations.

3. At the same time, I drew attention to the fact that UNPROFOR soldiers were increasingly being targeted by all sides and informed the Council that should the threats to the safety and security of United Nations personnel, "which have already reached unacceptable levels", mount further, I would have to inform the Council that a viable basis for their functioning no longer existed.

4. In recommending that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNPROFOR by a further three months, to 30 September 1993, I stated that "significant progress will be required in the peacemaking efforts of the Co-Chairmen if any further renewal is to be contemplated beyond that date".

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

5. The situation with regard to the implementation of United Nations resolutions has not changed since the submission of my previous report of 25 June 1993. During the past month the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia have made determined efforts for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 802 (1993) and 847 (1993). I should like to draw attention in this regard to the Report of the Co-Chairmen which I transmitted to the Council on 3 August 1993 (S/26233, paras. 15-26).

6. The Security Council issued, on 15 July 1993, a Presidential statement (S/26084) in which it noted that it continued to attach the highest importance to securing the reopening of the Maslenica crossing to civilian traffic. Nevertheless, it considered that the Croatian Government's planned unilateral reopening of the Maslenica Bridge and of Zemunik Airport on 18 July 1993, in the absence of agreement between the parties and others in cooperation with UNPROFOR, would jeopardize both the objectives of the Council's resolutions and in particular the call in its resolution 847 (1993) for agreement on confidence-building measures and the efforts of the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia and UNPROFOR to achieve a negotiated settlement to the problem. The Security Council urged the Government of the Republic of Croatia to refrain from this action.

7. Subsequently, in the light of information received from my Special Representative, the Council issued another Presidential statement on 30 July 1993 (S/26199) in which it called for the implementation of an agreement reached by the parties on 15/16 July 1993 at Erdut, which required the withdrawal of Croatian armed forces and police from the area of the Maslenica Bridge by 31 July 1993, and the placing of the bridge under the exclusive control of UNPROFOR.

8. Subsequent to the adoption of the preceding statement, UNPROFOR, in order to achieve the withdrawal of the Croatian forces in fulfilment of the Erdut agreement, moved 2,000 troops into the areas adjacent to those from which the Croatian forces should withdraw. It has, however, been unable to deploy because the Croatian military authorities would not allow UNPROFOR full access to the areas concerned, nor provide any cooperation towards the planning or reconnaissance of the operation.

9. On 2 August 1993, following Serb shelling of the area, one of the pontoons of the Maslenica Bridge sank, but the Co-Chairmen concluded that there was still enough common ground to continue negotiations. They therefore extended an invitation to both sides to come to Geneva at their earliest convenience to begin negotiations on a cease-fire which will include the elements of the original Erdut agreement. The parties have accepted the invitation and talks started on 12 August 1993 in Geneva.

III. OBSERVATIONS

10. It will be clear from the above that the problems described in my earlier report on the situation in Croatia have not been resolved. I have none the less instructed my Special Representative and the Force Commander of UNPROFOR to maintain their efforts to persuade both sides to cooperate with UNPROFOR in the implementation of Security Council resolutions. It is therefore my view that no action should be taken at this stage to reconsider UNPROFOR's mandate in the territory of the Republic of Croatia. Whether, and in what manner, progress in the implementation of the United Nations peace-keeping plan for Croatia can be achieved will be influenced by the outcome of current efforts for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 802 and 847. In this regard, faithful compliance by all sides with agreements voluntarily entered into, as well as scrupulous respect for the injunctions of the Security Council, are crucial. Peace can only be advanced if negotiations are carried out in good faith and agreements reached through such negotiations are fully implemented. I shall submit a further recommendation to the Council in the latter half of September.

11. In a letter dated 30 July 1993, addressed to me (S/26220), the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia drew attention again to the letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia (S/25973) proposing the separation of the mandate of UNPROFOR into three independent mandates, for the Republic of Croatia, Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia respectively. Following consultations with my Special Representative and the Force Commander, I have given the matter careful consideration, but in view of the overlapping political, administrative and operational considerations that have so far justified an integrated mandate, I am unable at this time to respond positively to the Croatian proposal. I shall, none the less, keep the matter under review.